

Final Paper

Bancroft Library's Oral History Center (OHC) at the University of California, Berkeley
Internship

Sandra Gonzalez LIM595: Internship in Library and Information Management

Dr. Melissa L. Miller

University of Southern California

Marshall School of Business

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Abstract

I chose to intern at The Oral History Center at Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley to gain hands-on experience in metadata. My site supervisor, David, ensured that I was adequately trained, provided training materials and resources, and scheduled weekly check-ins. I worked on the Women in Politics Oral Histories project, creating metadata for the Hope Mendoza Schechter interview. My work on the Hope Mendoza Schechter interview included syncing the audio to the transcript, indexing and titling, and adding keywords. Additionally, I included summaries to each session and ensured that they were searchable and retrievable for research purposes. My work with the Women in Politics Oral Histories met several of the American Library Association's Core Competencies of Librarianship, including Information resources, organization of recorded knowledge and information, and Technological knowledge and skills. These skills will equip me for my career in the LIS field.

Statement of Purpose

Memo of Understanding (MOU) Goals and Objectives

The Bancroft Library's Oral History Center (OHC) is located at the University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley). It is a knowledge organization that documents and preserves history through audio recordings (Berkeley Library University of California, n.d.). The OHC is known for its Rosie the Riveter World War II Front, AIDS Epidemic in San Francisco, and Port Chicago Disaster interviews. They hold many interviews in various formats, which can all be found online on its website as it is all open access. Their goals are to make their collections as searchable and discoverable as possible continuously. The choice for this internship was due to organizing recorded knowledge and information resources. The goal was to learn how to create metadata, and this internship allowed the opportunity to practice hands-on instead of reading about it from a textbook. At this time, there is an abundant amount of information available at a moment's notice, and information professionals must grapple with the idea of having to manage, maintain, and preserve what they can. This internship would teach valuable content management and metadata skills used anywhere.

The OHC's mission is to "document the history of California, the nation, and the interconnected global arena. OHC produces carefully researched, audio/video-recorded, and transcribed oral histories and historical interpretative materials for the widest possible use. OHC was formerly known as the Regional Oral History Office" (Berkeley Library University of California, n.d.). Due to its vast collection of primary source documents, interns need to go through hundreds of hours of audio and make them accessible to the public. In addition, interns must index, keyword, and create descriptive metadata, ensuring discoverability, increasing

scholarship. This metadata process impacts the achievement of the Oral History Center's mission to provide historical materials for the broadest possible use.

MOU goal/objective:

The site supervisor established this goal to comply with the Oral History Center's administrative policies, procedures, rules, and regulations. The OHC has established policies that protect the confidentiality of the interviewee regarding sensitive content and has specific methods for creating metadata for the interviews. For example, the instructions were not to edit the transcript. Instead, make notes about any discrepancies found in the audio and report any sensitive information. The procedures for preparing interviews on OHMS outline ways that make work contingent. Each process must be completed before the next task can begin. These rules and procedures are in place, so interns provide effective and efficient metadata. For example, spot listening interviews allow interns to 1) annotate any discrepancies within the transcript and 2) flag any dialogue of sensitive nature to be removed from the recording to protect both the institution and the interviewee. Weekly check-ins with the internship team tracked this objective and discussed any questions regarding policies, procedures, and regulations.

MOU goal/objective:

The site supervisor also established the objective to review reference and Oral History Metadata Synchronizer (OHMS) training materials. Completing the training materials was necessary to ensure interns knew the policies and procedures when working on the collections. The training materials included the Fall 2021 OHMS Mini guide to OHMSing (Oral History Center, n.d.b), which contained many links to valuable resources. These resources included training videos on using the Oral History Metadata Synchronizer and managing the keyword spreadsheets. They also contained 'How-to' guides for creating titles, synching transcripts, and

creating the metadata interview level data. The training materials provided all the tools needed to complete the internship effectively. The progress was tracked through the Fall 2021 OHC Librarian Hour Log (Oral History Center, n.d.) and during the weekly check-ins. Completion of the training materials was annotated, and they were available as a reference when needing additional assistance with a project.

MOU goal/objective:

This goal was established as a team to update the Librarian Hours Log every Monday by submitting the hours worked that week, a summary of activities, and any questions needing attention. The weekly check-ins were conducted on Mondays, and our hours were logged by then to ensure we were on track. We also logged any questions or concerns into the Librarian Hours Log (Oral History Center, n.d.). At the end of each week, all the hours were tallied and completed tasks documented. In addition, there was a record of work completed and timestamps for each task.

MOU goal/objective:

This goal is to fulfill weekly tasks on time with appropriate care and attentiveness and request guidance, clarification, and further training promptly when needed, as determined by the Site Supervisor. At the weekly check-ins, the tasks from the previous week were discussed and addressed any issues encountered. David graciously answered all questions and provided appropriate resources when needed. Additionally, he provided feedback about work and offered suggestions on improving the work when necessary. David also provided new assignments and tasks for the rest of the week. This method was repeated every week to guarantee that the team was on track and resolved issues immediately before continuing assignments.

MOU goal/objective:

The site supervisor determined the objective of performing OHMS segmenting, titling, keywording metadata tasks per the Oral History Center's guidelines, and reviewing and updating related OHC metadata spreadsheets with OHMS updates. The Oral History Center's guidelines determine how the work is administered. They have specific standards for segmenting, titling, and keywording metadata tasks outlined in the training materials. Several hours of the Hope Mendoza Schechter interview was segmented (Schechter, H. M., 1980). This assignment required listening intently for cues to end a segment. There were times when the interviewee went on a tangent and then returned to talk about the topic at hand, so the listener must ensure that they did not end a segment prematurely. There were also timing issues to consider because the segments could not be too short and not too long. Titling also required a review of the audio and the transcript to capture the entire interview. Keywording metadata for the interviews was necessary to establish searchability for users. These terms need to be specific enough to expand discoverability. The terms also need to be relevant and fit the context of the interviews. For example, there are instances where the interviewee recalls an event, and we need to acknowledge the topic discussed. In some cases, the topic is not explicitly stated in the interview, but in its context, we need to include a keyword that will pinpoint that moment in the interview.

MOU goal/objective:

The internship professor set the objective to compile a final written report with detailed documentation of specific activities and related learning outcomes and experiences achieved during this internship. This report will also include the Intern's evaluation of her internship outcomes. Each week a paper was developed that explained tasks and assignments established by David, the site supervisor. It helped analyze the work and how it aligned with the competencies of librarianship. It also helped me remain accountable to the internship hours and the team.

Evidence for the MOU Goals and Objectives

One competency used for the Women in Politics Oral histories project was Information resources. The OHMS system is a content management system (CMS). OHMS is used to maintain and manage accurate information. Specifically, OHMS is a web content management system (WCMS) that allows for the organization and management of oral histories. Utilizing OHMS (Louis B. Nunn Center for Oral History, 2011) taught me the processes involved in the back end, including the time and labor involved in creating metadata. In addition, the indexing process allowed improving the "organization and representation of" the Women in Politics interviews (American Library Association, 2009). These interviews offer critical insights into the political activities of female activists of the 1970s. For example, the interview with Hope Mendoza Schechter offers valuable information about the movements of the labor unions and the democratic party during key election events in California. These events could prove valuable for a researcher, therefore meeting the organization of recorded knowledge and information competency.

The Technological knowledge and skills competency was met using OHMS, as it provides a service to users by making knowledge information accessible. Data must be managed effectively because it determines how users receive and access information—adapting to various changes during the internship and varying assignments based on available digital materials—working in a changing environment and adapting to change met the Personal/Interpersonal Competencies. Access to the digital content of the interviews is being supported by ensuring they are correctly indexed and accurate metadata created. It facilitates access to historical digital documents available in OHMS and meets the Library Collection Competencies. The OHMS system is designed to work with a YouTube video embedded within the OHMS management

system (Louis B. Nunn Center for Oral History, 2011). While there are no actual visuals, it plays like a video but deals primarily with audio. This function helps increase knowledge in technology competencies, including Systems and IT, and learn how other platforms like YouTube are embedded within these data management systems and how they can be leveraged to confirm discovery for users.

Importance of the MOU Goals and Objectives

Achieving my MOU goals and objectives was very important for my growth and learning as a library and information science student. These objectives allowed me to practice accountability, teamwork, practical communication skills, and enhance my skills using programs such as Google Sheets and online content management software such as OHMS (Louis B. Nunn Center for Oral History, 2011). For example, the weekly meetings ensured accountability for completing the weekly assignments. They also improved communication between the team and the site supervisor. Additionally, the objectives allowed for practice using programs unfamiliar with, such as Google Sheets and the Oral History Metadata Synchronizer.

Most importantly, learning the functionality of indexing, titling, and creating descriptive metadata through keywords has helped me better understand the backend of online content management systems. These tools will prepare me for my career in the LIS field. Creating metadata is an essential function used in various departments. With technology constantly advancing, I can see how metadata will be valuable for digitized and online content management. Ultimately, the goal is to increase access to information, so metadata is crucial in meeting that goal.

Furthermore, these objectives assisted the Oral History Center's mission is "producing carefully researched audio/video recorded and transcribed oral histories" (Berkeley Library

University of California, n.d.). Ensuring that materials were ready for wide dissemination by listening to the audio, ensuring that the quality was there, and the content matched the transcript was important. In cases where audio was faulty or of sensitive nature, we removed that information. This ensured that the audio was ready for the following process of syncing. Syncing allows users to pinpoint the exact location of the audio. Once syncing is completed, indexing and titling can occur. Each step is contingent upon the previous step before reaching the metadata interview level. This process is necessary to ensure the utmost quality of materials is available to the public.

Conclusion

The time with the Oral History Center was valuable to my studies and future career in library and information science. The main goal was to understand better the topic of metadata and the creation of metadata; however, completing this internship provided a greater insight into technology, digital resources, and recorded knowledge. Using the American Library Association Core Competencies of librarianship (American Library Association, 2009) and the competency index for the library handbook (Gutsche & Howe, 2014), the completion of metadata for the Hope Mendoza Schechter interview was successful. During the internship, some of the implemented elements were communication, accountability, information resources, and the organization of recorded knowledge. Additionally, technological knowledge and skills and digital resource technology were vital to the completion of the assignments and in meeting my goals and objectives.

This internship has highlighted the value of technology and online content management systems (CMS). In these studies, we have learned about various CMSs, but this internship allowed me to apply this knowledge and practice it in a real-life scenario. I learned how to use

components of a CMS and how the work that happens on the back end is critical to the organization of knowledge. There are many CMSs, but this internship allowed learning to use OHMS. It also allowed using other technical systems and programs unfamiliar with, including Google Sheets and OHMS. Google Sheets was used for tracking internship hours, keywords, indexing, titling, and timestamps. I also learned how embedding works; for example, YouTube was embedded within OHMS to facilitate discoverability. Many things needed balancing when indexing and creating keywords, such as the content played in the audio, the transcript, the timing, and finally, the context of the material. All these functions were necessary to create relevant metadata. I learned that creating metadata could be a daunting task that requires much patience, but ultimately it is needed to ensure that the public gets the most out of the resources. Overall, my goal is to be as efficient and objective as possible to improve OHMS and make the resources more accessible.

Additionally, I learned to be more communicative and accountable through the weekly check-ins with the site supervisor and team, weekly papers, and one-on-ones with Dr. Miller. These were opportunities to talk about work, receive feedback, and learn from that feedback. The weekly check-ins held me accountable and allowed me to communicate with my site supervisor and teammates to discuss similar issues and how we overcame them. The weekly papers also helped me stay accountable while teaching me how work met various library competencies. This tool is essential for searching for employment within the LIS field. Since reaching the end of the MMLIS program, job hunting has become a priority. Some positions require you to meet specific competencies during the job searching process. The fact that I had to complete this process for the weekly papers has given me knowledge and practice to continue to explain how to meet the competencies and therefore increase the chances of employability.

Being an intern for the Oral History Center at Bancroft library in UC Berkeley was truly a unique opportunity to delve into descriptive metadata. Its mission is to provide open access to its primary sources online. It is a privilege to assist in making this recorded knowledge further accessible. More information is being digitized and placed online, but it is not always available for free. The OHC is one of the few institutions that value open access and continuously make all their recorded knowledge available. While creating the metadata and indexing, I had to think critically about the context of the material to guarantee that valuable keywords were included even if they were not explicitly stated in the audio. One must always attempt to be as objective as possible and be conscious of any biases. It was a big responsibility to create keywords to determine whether each segment would be easily retrieved. Overall, the experience in this internship was a positive one. The professor and site supervisor provided the tools, resources, and support needed to succeed in this internship. In addition, the site supervisor has allowed me to stay on the Women in Politics Oral Histories project. I am excited to continue working and learning more about the management of recorded knowledge. I encourage future interns to continue beyond the one semester of their internship to gain the most from this experience.

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